



NEWS RELEASE

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MISSISSIPPI ANNOUNCES SMALL-SCALE/LIMITED RESOURCE FARMER INITIATIVE

Jackson, Mississippi, November 9, 2006 -- The Natural Resources Conservation Service in Mississippi will make available **\$1,000,000** for Small-Scale/Limited Resource Farmer Initiative. These funds will help farmers with **100 acres or less** of cropland or pastureland to implement conservation practices that are cost-effective.

These practices include: erosion control, water management, grazing land management, livestock watering facilities, fencing and irrigation systems and sustainable forestry. To be eligible for irrigation practices, at least 10 percent of the cropland acres must be planted in alternative crops. That means if you place twenty five (25) acres of cropland into this new program, at least two and one half acres must be planted in alternative crops. Alternative crops are crops other than cotton, soybeans, wheat, rice, field corn, or similar crops grown on large acreage and produced for off-farm sale. Crops such as annually planted vegetables and herbs are considered alternative crops. Cost-share rates will be up to 90 percent for all practices, with contracts limited to \$10,000.

IMPORTANT SIGN-UP DATES: Sign-up for this initiative is ongoing through **December 29, 2006**. Please go to your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office to sign up. This office is located in the USDA Service Center in your county.

For more information, contact your local district conservationist in the office mentioned above or visit www.ms.nrcs.usda.gov.

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